# GAMBLING IN MID-OCEAN.

## Numerous Games of Chance Indulged in by Passengers.

**Poker Leads in Popularity on Board Ship—Pools Formed on the Day's Run and on the Arrival of the Pilot—Other Schemes Resorted To.**

A trans-Atlantic trip means almost unavoidably a certain amount of gambling. It means also a disregard of blue-stocking principles in other directions, for when the average man is thrown on his own resources for a period of a week or more his purely moral accomplishments and interests are nearly always sure to be exhausted, his ability to amuse himself strictly within the Ten Commandments and its corollaries is certain to come to an end, and the result is some sort of evil-doing which he would not allow himself on land. Of all the things that on shipboard tempt one from the "straight and narrow path," games of chance are the most irresistible. Few go through the trip without falling victim to them in one form or another. They exist under a multiplicity of disguises, calculated to make the infraction of moral rule acceptable to varied consciences, and he who succeeds in dodging all the inducements to gamble encountered is surely a marvel.

Ennui is the great thing to conquer aboard ship, next, of course, to seasickness, and gambling seems to be the stone that kills the two birds at once. The smoking-room steward of any trans-Atlantic liner will tell you that he has never seen a man become seasick or ever feel the influence of rough weather when interested in a stiff poker game, and he will probably add after you have started him making reminiscenses, that he can tell you of many men who resort to no other cure for seasickness than plunging, which they practice from the moment they get up in the morning until they turn in at night.

All of this, though perhaps somewhat colored, is, to an extent, true. It is no fancy of the imagination that fortunes have been lost on board ship by rich men who sought the excitement of the gaming table in order to keep their dinners down and to avoid all the other discomforts of stomach and head that accompany overactivity of the vessel.

Those who crossed over on a big Cunarder several years ago have not tired of telling about a poker game in the smoking-room which had continued many days through such rough weather that the cards at times would not stay on the table. The seven men who took part had been in their seats every day during the voyage, and had played during their waking hours uninterruptedly. In the party was the sugar king, Claus Spreckles, and the remaining members were capitalists of a calibre able financially to hold their own with him. The voyage was to close on the seventh morning, and the play during the sixth day had been high. It was a no-limit game, and when that sixth night, after dinner, the participants took their places around the green baize, some anxious to recoup their losses, others desirous of holding what they had gained, the gambling blood of all the male, and of many of the female passengers, was at boiling point. Every man of the seven around the table was out for blood, and the ante was a $100 bill, of which there happened to be fourteen on the boat. The smoking-room was crowded with onlookers, and it was necessary to keep them at a distance from the players, lest the expression on the faces of the spectators should betray the hands held. Jackpots of $1,000 were the usual thing, and the play rose higher and higher, as the night wore on. A few moments before midnight the steward gave notice that the smoking-room was to close, and a final jackpot was called for. Mr. Spreckles opened, and drew three, one man dropped out, and one man stood pat. The betting began by $500, the blue chips representing that amount. Mr. Spreckles made it $5,000, and from that point the pile grew by $5,000 at a jump. It seemed that the raising would never stop, each man appeared to have the utmost confidence in his hand. Finally Mr. Spreckles called, and the show-down revealed three full houses, two three of a kind, and four jacks in the hands dealt. Mr. Spreckles held the four jacks. The count of the pot showed $122,500, $100,000 of which went to pay the losses which Spreckles had sustained during the previous six days of the voyage.

Poker on ships sailing from ports in the United States is, of course, the most common gambling game. But the "ship's company" is always rather a mixed one, wherefore games common to other nationalities are usually to be seen. Hearts at a "sou" per heart is commonly the second favorite of the smoking-room habitues, because nearly all nations play it. Baccarat and vingt-et-un occupy the gambling Frenchman. Ombre, a most complicated arrangement of cards, supposed to be symbolical of the life of man, takes the attention of the Spaniard, and similarly each nation has its favorite. Cards are the means most closely at hand by which the passenger can kill time and satisfy his desire to gamble, but it is not by any means the sole method of accomplishing these highly desirable objects. There are gambling devices on board ship peculiar to ocean travel and to be run across nowhere else.

The life of the whole day afloat centres around the posting of the map at the head of the main companionway, and the announcement of the "run" of the ship during the previous twenty-four hours. For an hour around about midday when the observations are taken by the captain upon the bridge, and the vessel's position calculated, the curious passengers are darting in and out of the companionway entrance, anxious to find if their guesses as to the distance made were correct. Naturally, Americans who are reputed to take any sort of an excuse to make a wager, would not miss such an opportunity as the one here afforded. The run of the ship is a thing dependent upon so many circumstances that the number of miles likely to be made is always a matter upon which there can be a great many opinions. Those who are wise and pretend to much knowledge concerning the movements of steam vessels spend hours near the engine-rooms listening to the throb of the machines or counting the revolutions of the screw. Then they return to their friends with loads of information that they refuse to divulge. All of this is preparatory to taking chances in the "pool" formed on the number of miles reeled off by the ship during the day.

There are many kinds of pools in vogue, but the commonest are the "hat" and "auction" pools. The object in all of them is, of course, to get by your luck or by your superior knowledge the number representing the day's run. If a hat pool is formed there are only the numbers from 1 to 9—0. The numbers are sold, and the lucky man is he who gets the number with which the figure of the day's run terminates. For example, if the day's run has been 488, the lucky man is the one who draws the 8.

The auction pool is slightly different. The possible run of the vessel can be guessed within certain limits, say within fifty miles. These fifty numbers are sold just as the numbers of the hat pool are sold, for, say, $1 each. In the middle of the forenoon those who have taken chances in the pool and others who are interested, assemble in the smoking-room, and an auction is held. The numbers are put up and auctioned off, the original holder of the number having the option of buying it in at half the amount of his bid. The entire proceeds of the auction go into the pool and the lucky man has, as a rule, somewhat over $100 to put in his pocket.

The crowning occasion of the whole trip is the taking on of the pilot, and any number of wagers centre around him. There is usually formed a pool on the probable hour, and one upon the minute of his arrival. His boat is usually one of a certain registered number, and that number is, of course, made the subject of a pool. Side bets as to the hand which he will put on the rail and the foot he will put on the bottom of the ladder, the color of his eyes and hair, and even his age and the number of children he has are plentiful among the passengers.

At the bottom of all the pools and other organized kinds of gambling is the smoking room steward, who is always active among the male travelers, soliciting them to take chances in the pools. His activity is by no means disinterested, for unwritten rule prescribes that he shall be a sharer in all winnings at least to the extent of the Scriptural tenth. When the pool runs up into the hundreds, as it frequently does on the larger vessels, his portion is quite a fat one. To these main kinds of gambling which take up the time and occupy the minds of the passengers, might be added any number invented by the passengers and popular during a single trip. Nearly everyone is badly bitten by the gambling fever on shipboard, and any method of exchanging money on chance if it has any novelty in it at all is bound to be popular.

Not all the gamblers are found on the main deck among the first cabin passengers. Probably the most inveterate of the entire boatload of people are in the steerage. The steerage is usually composed of Italians, Syrians, or Germans of a low type, who are overmuch given to gaming on shore. When they are cooped up on the narrow decks of a ship they give themselves up to their weakness without restraint, every greasy old pack of cards that can be found is pushed into service, and becomes during the whole trip, the centre of an earnest group of men, who are fingering piles of copper and small silver coins. Such an extremely old-fashioned game as "Lotto" will suffice to occupy a dozen or eighteen men during a whole week or ten days.

There are sad sides to ocean gambling and it is in the steerage that the sorrows are the most prominent. Many an emigrant has landed penniless in the United States because he has gambled away the few silver pieces he brought with him as the foundation of his fortune in the new land. For this reason many steamship companies forbid gambling among the steerage passengers, though the prohibition is most difficult to enforce. On the upper deck, also, too ardent men find themselves much crippled in finance, and their proposed trip much curtailed because of excesses at the green baize table. Of the professional gamblers on board ships, who are supposed to spend their time going from one side of the ocean to the other, fleecing the unsuspecting "by-the-way," there is not much to be said. There are probably some, but not so many as rumor would seem to indicate. A man's profession and social standing are too easily discovered on shipboard for professional sharpers to remain long undetected. It is the business of the smoking room steward to see that everything in his room is conducted properly, and smoking room stewards are usually smoking room stewards because they are cleverer than the average. Whatever may be said for or against gambling on shipboard, it is practically always "on the square."

## A PRINTER'S ERROR.

**How a Typo Closed a Theatre and Ruined a Manager.**

It very often happens that the intelligent and soft-eyed compositor flirts with the stilly hours of the night "when the land is in sleep and dream, love," and the next morning he goes to work seeing "as through a glass darkly" and in prime condition to "bull up" the fairest copy that ever came into a printing office.

An error committed by one of these accomplished nocturnal nightingales while setting up an advertisement might have resulted in a terrible tragedy the other day at Newport News, Va. Alfred Ranos, a vaudeville star, who was featured as the great attraction of last week's bill at the Buckroe Beach Theatre, refused to appear and delight an expectant audience, but after making a fruitless search for the manager of the theatre with a monkey-wrench, left town. Ranos, it seems, went from Baltimore to Newport News under a contract to play a week at a salary of $90. His strong suit is to do a comedy act in which he is assisted by a troupe of performing bull dogs.

When the manager of the theatre gave the usual copy to the show printer for the three-sheet bills advertising the week's show the announcement included the following: "See Al Ranos and his troupe of acrobatic bull terriers." The soft eyes of the intelligent compositor were still shedding some of the beer of the night before and the announcement appeared on the bills in this way: "See Al Ranos, the acrobatic bull terrier." When the manager discovered the error the bills had been posted all over the city and as Ranos was an Irishman who did not like to be called a terrier, acrobatic or any other kind, the manager eloped with himself across Hampton Roads and his friends are trying to discover his hiding place and assure him that Ranos—who is known off the stage as Rafferty—and his performing bull terriers have shaken the dust of Virginia. In the meantime the Buckroe Beach Theatre is in a state of suspended animation and the printer has a shirt wrapped up and is otherwise prepared to take the foot route North the moment he hears that the theatre manager has returned.—New Orleans States.

# SLUMBER IN PLANT LIFE.

## Flowers and Trees Sleep as Do Human Beings.

**A Naturalist of the Agricultural Department Explains This Remarkable Feature of Vegetable Existence—The Functions of Leaves.**

One of the naturalists connected with the Department of Agriculture is authority for the statement that plants sleep almost as truly as do animals.

"Perhaps the best marked form of slumber in the vegetable world," this gentleman said yesterday, "is that of the great winter rest, when so many species retire altogether under the sheltering soil and there lie dormant side by side with the slumbering animals. Of course, we know that when winter approaches the slick dormouse retreats into his snug nook, a woven nest of warm grasses just above the ground, where he dozes away the cold weather in a state of, to him, blissful unconsciousness. Squirrels hibernate in the holes of tree trunks, while bears grow fat in autumn, and after sleeping the winter through emerge in April mere wasted shadows of their October selves. As to the cold-blooded animals, such as newts and lizzards, snakes and adders, they dream away the chilly months, like the Seven Sleepers of Ephesus, coiled up in tangles among banks and hedges. The lesser creatures—snails and beetles and grubs and so forth—hibernate underground or conceal themselves in the crannies of rocks and walls. Now this winter rest of animals does not differ essentially from the winter rest of the crocus or the hyacinth, which withdraw all the living material from their leaves in autumn and bury themselves inches deep in the soil in the shape of a bulb till February rains or April suns tempt leaves and flowers out again.

"The whole vast class of bulbous and tuberous plants, indeed—the lilies, orchids, daffodils, narcissi, tulips, squills, blue bells, and snowdrops—are just hibernating creatures which retire underground in autumn with the slugs and the queen wasps to reappear in spring about the same time with the return to upper air of the moles, the tortoises, and the fritillary butterflies.

"But besides the yearly winter sleep or hibernation, a great many plants also sleep every night; in other words, they suspend more or less their usual activities and devote themselves to rest and recuperation. Look now at this mimosa bush, wide awake, of course, at this time of day. It has, you see, a very compound leaf, split up into four main parts or branches, each of which is again subdivided into many opposite pairs of leaflets. These leaves are now hard at work eating and drinking for the benefit of the plant. All the hundreds of the little mouths of the leaflets are absorbing the carbonic acid of the surrounding air, which is converted, under the influence of sunlight, into suitable plant food. This plant thus works for its living in the daylight just as truly as the busy bee when it gathers honey, or as the aunt works when it collects dead meat and scraps of provender. A plant can only eat its proper food, carbonic acid, when the light falls upon it; at night it must sleep, digest, and distribute what it has eaten. Should you see this mimosa during the dark hours you would see the main stems of the leaves, now erected in an upward direction, drooping downward, while the branches of the four-fold leaves hang close together instead of being spread out fan-shape as now, the leaflets folded close to their stems. Not only the famous and well-known sensitive plant sleeps like this, but also many other kinds of mimosa and acacia, much cultivated in greenhouses. It is a pretty sight to see them falling gradually asleep—dozing off, if I may be allowed the expression. First of all the opposite pairs of leaflets fold together upward, so as to present a single combined surface, like that of a hinged tablet when you shut its halves together. Then the four main leaf stalks on which the leaflets are fixed sink slowly down like a sleeping child and double themselves away out of the range of danger. Last of all, the principal leaf stalk or main midrib of the whole branch-like leaf itself droops and drops drowsily and the entire structure hangs limp, as if dead, against the branch that supports it.

"The machinery for producing these curious sleep movements is situated in certain very irritable little knobs at the base of the leaf stalk, one of which you can observe close to the stem here. The mechanism acts much like a nervous system; it governs the movements and altitudes of the leaf by night or day. In the true sensitive plants the leaflets fold up out of harm's way when touched. In most mimosas and acacias, however, they only fold at night or in very cold or dark weather. Their folding is partly effected for the sake of warmth, because they then expose only one surface of each leaf.

"All leaves go to sleep at night, but some very much more conspicuously than others. The cases in which you can actually see that they sleep are those of plants with thin and delicate foliage, where the leaves or leaflets gain mutual protection against radiation and cold by putting themselves, so to speak, two layers thick. Very dainty spring foliage shows sleep most obviously; very thick and coarse leaves, like those of the cyclamen, the rhododendron, the Siberian saxifrage, or the common laurel, sleep without folding; they have warmth enough or glassy covering enough to resist injury. Here again is seen the analogy between the nightly and the winter sleep; thin-leaved trees shed their leaves in autumn, thick leaved kinds, such as laurustinus, spruce, fir, and laurel, retain them unshed through the entire winter."

### Smoking a Crime.

There are a few tobacco haters of the present day who sigh for the return of the time of old when the use of the weed was punished as a crime and the users ostracised from society. Both the use and the planting of tobacco were forbidden, the cultivation of its being permitted only in small quantities, "for mere necessity, for phisick, for preservation of the health and that the same be taken privately by ancient men." But the "creature called tobacco" seemed to have an indestructible life. Landlords were ordered not to "suffer any tobacco to be taken into their houses on penalty of a fine to the "victualler" and another to "the party that takes it."

The laws were constantly altered and enforced, and still tobacco was grown and was smoked. No one could take it "publicquely" nor in his own house or anywhere else before strangers. Two men were forbidden to smoke together. No one could smoke within two miles of the meeting house on the Sabbath day. There were wicked backsliders who were caught smoking around the corner of the meeting house and others on the street, and they were fined and set in the stocks and in cages. Until within a few years there were New England towns where tobacco smoking in the streets was prohibited, and the innocent cigarette loving travelers were astonished at being requested to cease smoking. Mr. Drake wrote in 1886 that he knew men, then living, who had had to plead guilty or not guilty in a Boston Police Court for smoking in the streets of Boston. In Connecticut in early days a great indulgence was permitted to travelers—a man could smoke once during a journey of ten miles.—Chicago Chronicle.

## LIGHT IN EARLY DAYS.

**How the Pioneers' Wives and Children Made Tallow Dips.**

In no other way can the changes which have taken place since the pioneers came to Wisconsin be better illustrated than by the story of the means they had for purposes of illumination. The chief reliance of the pioneers in this line was the tallow candle, and it was considered a very good light in those times. Man has always known how to make light for himself since the discovery of fire, and he has utilized many different materials, always taking the best that could be found. In the pioneer days that best was tallow, and the pioneers bred cattle for sustenance and light. For this reason in addition to others, beef cattle were raised and slaughtered by the early settlers, and the "killing" was one of the features of the early winter season.

The pioneers did many things in common, and the killing of the cattle and hogs they raised was one of them. "Butchering day" was considerable of an event on the new farm. When the killing was completed it was customary to distribute portions of the beef around the neighborhood, to be returned in kind as the process was repeated on the other farms, and thus the people solved the problem of fresh meat supply for themselves. The same was done when other animals were slaughtered, and with what was left to go into the beef or pork barrel the farmer provided for his winter supply.

The tallow was turned over to the female portion of the family and used for the making of the winter supply of candles. These were made in various ways, sometimes by running into molds and sometimes by the dipping process. The "tallow dip" was one of the pioneer institutions, but as the settlers could afford it the more scientific molded candle took its place. This change came about gradually. Sometimes there would be but a single set of molds in a neighborhood, but, like everything else, they were at the service of everybody and they went from farm to farm until they had accomplished their purpose. It required no small degree of ability to perform these operations, and the first efforts of amateurs at making candles usually resulted in failure or needed the hand of an expert to save the day. Under the tutelage of the mother the children soon became expert enough in the various parts of the operation to be entrusted with the work, and under their hands the candle box became gradually filled, though there was many a sigh and groan at the long-continued application that was necessary. But the children of the pioneers learned to carry their share of the family burden, and they thus learned habits of industry that showed good results in later days. Then nothing that could be produced at home was bought, for there was little money and many ways for it to go.

The candle-making had to be done in cold weather, and the colder it was the faster the work proceeded. The big copper boiler was placed on the stove or hung over the fireplace and in it the tallow was melted. While waiting for it to reach this stage the wicks were measured off and cut to the proper length. When molds were used the wicks were placed in them, supported at the top by small pine sticks and knotted at the bottom to keep the melted tallow from escaping. Then the molds were filled with the melted tallow and set in a cold place to harden. When ready to draw the knots were cut and the candles were pulled out, leaving the molds ready for repetition of the process. Sometimes the wicks would break under the strain and then it was necessary to pour hot water on the outside of the molds, which were made of tin, thus melting the tallow sufficiently to permit the extraction of the candles. The wicking had to be soft to give a good light when ignited, and because of that fact it could not stand a strong pull and had to be handled very carefully, thus teaching the operator the necessary lesson of patience which helped to make up his education.

Under the dipping process a number of wicks were ranged on a stick as long as could be dipped into the boiler, and after each immersion in the melted tallow they were hung in a cold room for the tallow to harden, the process being repeated until the candle grew by successive additions to the required dimensions. Enough of the sticks carrying wicks were provided at the outset, so that the dipper could keep busy while another gave attention to the tallow that it should be kept from hardening in the boiler. This process was more rapid than the other, but the output was not so presentable, and consequently the molded candles were preferred. It was their practice in making tallow candles that gave the farmer boys the idea in later years, when coal oil became the general illuminant, that they could combine their experience with the new agent so as to provide a satisfactory lamp for night fishing in the lakes and streams around them.

Sometimes the store of candles showed signs of exhaustion before the long nights of winter had passed away, and as there was often no tallow at hand for another supply other expedients had to be used for lights. One of these was to place a strip of soft cloth in a shallow dish, one end hanging over the edge. Then the dish was filled with lard, and the combination made a very satisfactory light for those days, though hardly suitable to be placed before company.

In some cases camphene was burned in lamps, but its explosive character caused many people to regard it with suspicion, and it did not come into general use. The tallow candle of the pioneer served a very useful purpose. The mother had to knit and sew and patch and darn during the evening hours; the children had their lessons to study or their few books to read; the father had his harness to mend, his ax to hang, his mauls and wood and many other little things to do for which he could not afford to waste daylight. Often a whole family would be grouped around the table with one or two candles in the centre giving light for all, and they considered that they were very fortunate in having as good a light as it was, but a family of the present day would think themselves in almost total darkness under similar circumstances.—Milwaukee Sentinel.

### The New Reporter.

(From the Baltimore American.)

"That's a very poor story—very poor, indeed," growled the city editor to the new reporter, who had just turned in his account of the fire.

"What's the matter with it?" asked the n. r., who was an inquisitive youth.

"Matter? Why, man, at no point in the narrative do you refer to the brave fire ladies."

The new reporter returned to his desk in sadness, feeling that the intricacies of journalism were many, indeed.

# FREAK CARPETS AND RUGS

## What Inventors Have Done to Find Novel Effects.

**Paper, Leaves, Wood, Cement, Rushes, Grass, and Metal Fibre Have All Been Tried Without Success—A Cover Made From Ostrich Skins.**

A paper carpet, the first of its kind on record, was invented in 1806 by Francis Guy. It quickly proved a financial failure, and was intended for "summer use," to quote one of the inventor's advertisements which appeared at the time. Francis Guy was quite well known in his day as the proprietor of two large hotels, one in Philadelphia and the other in Baltimore.

The natives of Brazil long ago adorned their homes with feather mats, which they hung on the walls of their dwellings and occasionally placed before the doors of their houses, though they invariably placed a common mat by the side of the handsome one for use. These mats and hangings were made from the plumage of tropical birds, and the brilliant natural hues produced a handsome effect. The birds were caught in nets and slaughtered by the hundred, after which the feathers were dried in the sun.

A retired ship's captain is the proud possessor of a curious rug, made of seven ostrich skins, with the feathers entire, sewed together with catgut strings. The owner procured this valuable article on one of his voyages to Patagonia. The color effect is quite unique, and the ignorant native who put the skins together must have been a natural artist. It would be next to impossible to place a valuation on this rug, which is probably the only one of its kind in existence.

In 1888 a company was formed in New York for the purpose of manufacturing matting from rushes which grow wild in Georgetown County, S. C.

During the past year there have been several attempts to produce floor coverings from unusual materials. Late in the summer of 1900 an inventor by the name of Rosewig obtained the right to cut all the cattail plants in several counties of the State of New Jersey, where they grow in immense quantities. It was Mr. Rosewig's plan to weave the stems of the plants into a sort of matting.

The inventor even went so far as to build a special machine for decorticating the stem of the plant. It was claimed at the time that the fibre thus produced was superior to the ordinary Chinese or Japanese straw, being tougher and at the same time more durable, and producing a pleasant effect when woven.

A number of samples of the goods were shown in New York, and several individuals who ought to know pronounced the fabric excellent. The inventor has so far been unable to weave the stuff so as to place it on the market, but there is no doubt that the raw material could be procured in great quantities, at slight cost except the gathering.

One of the most curious fibres that has been used for weaving carpets is peat. A man bearing the euphonious title of Zschorner, of Vienna, after much experimenting, succeeded in producing some novel results. At the exhibition in Vienna one of the buildings was completely furnished from top to bottom with the products of peat. The carpets on the floors, the curtains at the windows, and the coverings on the wall were all made of this peculiar substance. Mr. Zschorner's experiments tends to prove that, while the properties of weeds and grasses that constitute peat are somewhat altered by decomposition, the fibre still remains intact, and possesses great toughness and durability. Peat is also, to a certain extent, elastic, non-combustible, and a non-conductor of heat.

Peat has also been made use of in Ireland in very much the same manner as described above, and with some degree of success.

A new process of producing floor coverings from wood was employed first in 1885. The first step was to reduce the wood to a flour and then to the consistence of pulp, and then to press it between rollers which forced out all moisture and removed all lumps from it. This was then mixed with oil and rolled into sheets, which were then ornamented by printing designs upon the surface. A coat of shellac or varnish was added to give a smooth surface, impervious to water.

Within the past two years the American manufacturers of linoleum have had offered to them by a German concern species of what they called "wood flour," which possessed a great deal of resiliency, and which they stated could be used successfully as a pulp from which to manufacture linoleums. American manufacturers, however, would have none of it, stating that they had experimented with it some years before and found that, although a sightly fabric could be made from it, after a short time it dried up and became so brittle that it cracked all to pieces.

In 1887 there was a firm that made mats, 30x24 inches in size, from fine wooden strips or shavings woven together with a stout warp. These mats were finished in a bright-colored border and presented quite an attractive appearance. They were shown at some of the stores and a number of them were sold, but the idea was soon abandoned as impractical.

In the fall of 1884 a novelty was introduced in Brussels and extra super ingrain carpeting by weaving gold and silver tinsel into the fabric. This gave the carpet a bright and rich appearance, but the tinsel was found soon to wear off. For the time being, however, these glistening carpets sold for about 10 cents a yard more than the ordinary patterns.

A gentleman who makes a practice of dreaming queer things to print in the papers had a particularly joyful nightmare one balmy evening last summer. He wrote an article on how to make "beautiful, novel, artistic, and inexpensive rugs" out of lamp wicks.

About eight years ago there appeared on the scene, or rather on the floors of some of the large buildings of New York and Philadelphia, a new kind of mat made from leather pieces from shoe factories. These very unique mats consisted of little discs of old leather cut into various shapes and fastened together with long wire staples.

A great question that faces the manufacturer of modern times is how to utilize the waste that must occur in all lines of industry to a greater or less extent. In almost every business there is a provision made for disposing of its waste, so that it may be used for some other purpose, and this is true of the floor-covering industry.

Waste cork from the big factories that turn out the various products of this material is utilized in the making of linoleum.

An innovation in the construction of floors was invented by one Otto Kraner, of Chemnitz, Germany, in 1896. It was a special preparation of paper pulp, which the inventor called papyrolith. It was prepared as a dry powder, which was to be mixed with water. When this mixture was spread on a foundation of stone, cement or wood, it dried in a short time, after which it was planed and polished down to a smooth surface.

Six or seven years ago a party of men in Lowell, Mass., conducted some experiments with a process for making metallic yarns for use in weaving carpets. The aim of this invention was to increase the durability of the fabric, not ornamentation, as the tinsel effect already mentioned. The yarn was coated with a metallic solution of aluminum, borax, alum, litharge, and wax, mixed with white lead. These produced a metallic coating that was fairly flexible and soft, while its appearance much resembled pure aluminum.

Undoubtedly the star innovation in carpet floor covering was that made by a manufacturer who was originally a maker of straw goods in Boston, when he tried to introduce in 1832 a fabric which he termed "Oriental carpetings." This fabric was woven to all intents and purposes after the manner of ordinary carpeting, but instead of the warp being of wool or jute fibre, it was made of twisted tissue paper. The opposition which this fabric met in the beginning was exceedingly strong and persistent, but after years of laborious and expensive experimenting the inventor was able to produce a fibre from which he has since successfully made rugs and carpetings which were durable, sanitary, and very sightly.

In almost every large town in the country there is now located an establishment where old carpets can be made into serviceable rugs.

The old carpets are raveled and dyed and woven again into rugs, which really make quite a presentable appearance. In this way carpets that would otherwise find their way into the ash heap are given a renewed existence in the form of rugs.

One of the most successful of these unique fabrics was first made in Minnesota in 1898. Twines, mats, rugs, carpet lining, and other products are made from the wild grasses that grow so abundantly on the marshes of that State. This grass is treated by patent process and is utilized now in making many articles of furniture. Mats and matting made of grass twine are becoming more and more popular as summer furnishings, as they are light, cool and durable, and have a pleasant "woody" odor. Furniture made from this material is much used on piazzas. At the Paris fair last year the American Building was decorated with the grass-twine products.

Besides the uses already mentioned, this substance is used as a wall covering, and it would be quite possible to furnish an entire room with the articles now manufactured from the grass fibre.

At one time, a little over ten years ago, it was proposed to use cow's hair in making carpets. The process was described by its enthusiastic promoters as a cheap one, and the product as better than the ordinary woolen carpets. It was claimed that the new industry would prove a great benefit to cattle raisers by providing a new market for the hair.

Woven rugs in imitation of the natural sheepskin mats have been made. A suitable partly spun yarn was woven into a backing in such a manner as to leave loops which when cut gave the desired length and appearance. After the wool used in these rugs had been dyed, it was curled a little in order to impart to it the wavy appearance of the natural fleece.

In 1883 a California woman produced a carpeting from rags and wool shreds that was said to possess a resemblance to the Axminster fabric. It was never woven commercially.

A few years ago there was some discussion as to whether it was possible to make a carpet from the pith of the cornstalk. It never went any further than discussion, however.

Years ago in the Southern States there was quite a trade done in paper oilcloth. This material very nearly corresponded to the samples which the big oilcloth manufacturers get out yearly, and was printed on a very heavy quality of tough paper from the same blocks that the genuine cloth was printed from. The principal demand for paper oilcloth was naturally from the poorest element, as the price was much lower than the genuine article.—American Carpet and Upholstery Journal.

## A MOST SWELL WEDDING.

**Highly Colored Account Given by a Negro Paper in Texas.**

One of the most swell weddings that ever took place in this city among those in upper G circles was that of one of Austin's noble sons of the ministry and Dallas' tenderest bud and a leader as well as "belle" of Dallas society, the Rev. Joseph B. Pius and Miss Alberta Jackson, which occupied the matrimonial altar at the New Hope Baptist Church last Wednesday. As old Uncle Sol, after a night of bliss beyond the unseen, had rested from the previous day's stroll across the horizon, and started on another day's journey, and as he peeped his weary head from behind the Eastern hills, and began to sprinkle the earth with his beautiful rays of silvery sunshine, found at the home of Dr. and Mrs. A. S. Jackson's great preparations holding the minds of the family and friends preparing one of the earthly angels of the family to make ready to repair to New Hope Church, where she was to join hands with that highly accomplished, able orator, Christian, and handsome young man, Dr. Pius, and as Uncle Sol tramped the milk-white patch of the blue sky, he peeped in New Hope and found many tender hands decorating this large and stately edifice, and when those having this work in hand had left the church it was fitted for the Queen of England to have wedded in. Just in front of the altar, suspended from the ceiling, hung a beautiful bell of art and design, made of tender buds after they had been opened but for a day, under which one of Dallas' blossoms was to cast herself upon another for life.

The pulpit was simply a bed of oleanders, rubber plants, ferns, palms, century plants, and the mistletoe, and the Golden Gate rose and carnations of the Far West had their conspicuous places about the pulpit, which made it one of the most beautiful, loveliest spots on earth for a wedding. Uncle Sol, after peeping in the church, strolled on his path toward the Western horizon in his usual way, seeming pleased at what he had seen, casting his rays on hundreds of the elite of Dallas, wending their way toward the church, and long before the hour appointed for the marriage Uncle Sol found the church crowded, and as Uncle Sol had crossed the mark dividing the morning from the afternoon, Mrs. Annie Starr, seated at the large and handsome pipe organ, began to deftly touch the keys, and Mendelssohn's wedding march began to ripple in its sweetest tones through the large edifice. Those looking toward the side entrance saw Dr. A. Barbour, of Galveston; Dr. Joseph B. Pius, and a portion of the family of both contracting parties enter.

Those looking down toward the main entrance saw Rev. N. H. Pius, brother of the groom, and Miss A. T. Jackson, sister of the bride, wending their way up the aisle toward the pulpit, followed by Dr. A. S. Jackson, with his daughter, the bride, Miss Maude Alberta, and as they reached the altar of bliss Dr. Pius and Miss Maude stopped beneath the bell of flowers, where Dr. A. Barbour, in great and solemn words, began to unite them for life. After doing so, and before announcing them man and wife, called on Dr. A. R. Griggs to pray, which he did, praying the Heavenly Father to bless this particular marriage, after which Dr. A. Taylor was called upon to make a few remarks, which he did in glowing and appreciative words, then Dr. A. Barbour pronounced them man and wife. They repaired to the home of the bride, where delicious refreshments were served, and late in the afternoon the contracting parties, relatives, and friends went to the depot to bid Dr. and Mrs. Pius godspeed to their future home, Austin, Tex. The bride wore a white organdie over cream silk, trimmed with old Swiss lace, bedecked with white ribbon, white kid gloves, and white kid slippers, and a beautiful gold band presented her by the groom at the altar. She also wore a handsome white wreath and white silk veiling. Miss A. T. Jackson, the bridesmaid, wore a white organdie over pink silkoline cream bow knot, white kid gloves and slippers, gold necklace and locket. The groom and his brother wore regulation black.—Dallas Hustler.

# RESTORES DEATH PENALTY

## Colorado Again Returns to Capital Punishment.

**Many Prisoners Have Demanded the Privilege of Being Hanged and Have Sorely Tried the State Officials — An Automatic Gallows.**

Capital punishment has again been made the penalty for murder in Colorado. By an act approved March 29, 1897, the death penalty was abolished in the State, imprisonment for life being substituted. It has taken a scant four years to satisfy the people of Colorado and through them the State Legislature that a more drastic deterrent of murder was needed.

The abolition of the law making death by hanging the penalty for murder in the first degree was repealed owing to the oratorical and sentimental campaign waged in 1896 by those who were opposed to capital punishment. It was alleged, as it always is, that imprisonment for life was a more severe penalty than death. While in the estimation of most people this is an undoubted truth, it seems to be perfectly certain that, when considered in the abstract, it exercises very little, if any, deterrent effect upon criminals. The records of the police departments of the State show that during the last four years there has been a heavy increase in those crimes of violence which are likely, in their results, to result in a trial for murder. The police also declare that since the abolition of capital punishment more police officers have been wounded by the bullets of fleeing criminals than in the twelve years preceding its abolition. They say that during the last four years every burglar they have caught has been armed, and that this class of criminal has shown a disposition to use weapons with a freedom unknown before the passage of the act which put a stop to hanging.

Colorado is the second State to return to capital punishment. Iowa abolished hanging in 1872, and gladly restored it in 1878. During those six non-hanging years Iowa had some experiences with its criminals which it is not likely to forget. One or two attempts have since been made to again abolish executions in that State, but each has met with an overwhelming defeat.

Now that Colorado has returned to the use of the death penalty there are only four States in which capital punishment is not resorted to. These four States are Rhode Island, Maine, Michigan, and Wisconsin. In Kansas, too, capital punishment has been practically abolished, for the law ordains that the Governor of the State shall himself sign the death warrant of every convicted criminal. The Governors have for many years shown a great reluctance to sign the death warrants of convicted men, the reason usually advanced being that they did not know the history of the crime or the details of the trial. This gubernatorial reluctance to sign death warrants has at times caused a great deal of trouble, for the only alternative is a commutation of sentence. In nearly a dozen cases criminals who have been condemned to death have refused to ask for either a pardon or a commutation of sentence, and have loudly demanded the execution of the death sentence upon them. The men who insist upon being hanged are one of the trials of the Governors of Kansas.

In returning to capital punishment Colorado will again employ a method of execution of which it claims to be the originator. It is that in which the condemned criminal, by stepping on a particular plank, automatically hangs himself. It is claimed by the prison authorities of Colorado that this method of execution was invented by a convict in the State penitentiary, but Canada disputes this claim, saying that it has been in use for years by some of the prisons of the Dominion.

The law by which Colorado re-established the gallows in its State was one of the few bills which the Governor did not sign. Under the State law all bills which have passed the Legislature become laws ninety days after their passage, if during the time intervening, the Governor shall not have vetoed them. In this case the Governor of Colorado has neither signed nor vetoed the bill, but it still becomes a law.

For the past month Warden E. H. Martin, of the Canon City penitentiary, has been preparing an apparatus similar to that which was in use before the abolition of hanging. There is a separate execution house, which also contains three condemned cells. The cells are separated from the execution room by a wide passage.

The execution chamber itself is divided in half. One side contains the noose and the fatal plate in the floor; the other is reserved for the apparatus which operates the rope. The apparatus is simple and is said to be merciful.

When the condemned man is brought into the execution room the noose is placed about his neck and the cap is drawn over his face. He is then told to step forward. As he obeys he steps upon a plank, which puts the machinery in operation. The weight of the criminal works on a lever attached to a string, which, when pulled, draws the plug from a large vessel containing water. When the water reaches a certain point a trigger is released which, in its turn, liberates an enormous bag of sand or other heavy weight. This weight is attached to the other end of the hangman's rope, and the result of its fall is that the condemned man is jerked violently off his feet and into the air. When the body comes to rest, which it does at once, it hangs about two feet from the floor.

This method of execution was employed upon twelve murderers before the passage of the abolition law, and there were no failures. The neck of each man was dislocated at once and death is said to have been instantaneous. Under the old method nearly a minute elapsed between the time of stepping upon the plank and the falling of the weight.

While this is said to be no longer than the agonizing moments preceding the drop on the ordinary scaffold, it is thought to be entirely unnecessary, and it will, if possible, be abolished. It is said that this delay was purposely introduced into the operation of the mechanism so as to allow of time for the adjustment of a misplaced noose or even for its removal temporarily. These two reasons are alleged to be absurd. It it understood that an electrical device is to be applied which will make the operation of the cord instantaneous. As soon as the condemned man touches the plank the weight will work.

This, it is said, is the most merciful means of execution known. There is none of the awful waiting that existed under the old regime, and the criminal is spared the torture of that horrible, helpless fall through space which precedes death by the trap door scaffold. Those who know the mild discomfort of a swiftly descending elevator can add to that feeling ten thousand times and then remember how swift is the thought of man. Between the springing of the trap and the straightening of the rope, during that six foot fall, there is time for a man to die twenty deaths of tortured fear. The criminologists of Colorado understand this and they are trying, by their present device, to abolish this. If death must be inflicted, they say, it should at least be free from needless torture.—Brooklyn Eagle.

### Sun Spots.

(From the Chicago Post.)

"Here's something about a woman who has taken up the study of sun spots," she exclaimed.

"Indeed!" he returned, absent-mindedly. "She must have a freckled boy."